

REMARKS

The above listing of the claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. In this supplemental amendment claims 1, 13 and 15 have been amended to further clarify the claimed subject matter. Reexamination and reconsideration in light of the above amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

In response to the Examiner having uncovered a new reference to Kang (US 2002/0082060 A1, filed October 10, 2001 and published June 27, 2002, and having cited this reference during a telephonic interview conducted on September 7, 2005 - the Applicants would like to advance the observations that Kang discloses a slave device 20 which takes three modes: a transmission mode (start state), a reception mode (communication control state) or an operation hold (standby state). In Kang, the master 30 sequentially transmits the polling data according to a slave link order and at a predetermined slot interval. The active slave device 20 holds transmission/reception operation during an internally determined sleep period which is determined according to the information about the number of slave devices connected to the master 30 – see paragraph [0040]. At the end of this sleep period the slave device wakes up to receive the polling data from the master 30 for the next cycle. Kang discloses that the sleep period should be shorter than the interval from the polling data reception to the next polling data reception for the next cycle – see paragraph [0047].

In the present invention, the switch between the standby state and the communication control state in the slave is controlled by the state control section at a predetermined timing and predetermined time period. Claims 11 and 12 set forth that the master repeatedly transmits the start request signal for a longer time than the time required until, after the state control section of the slave switches the slave to the communication control state, the state control section switches the slave to the standby state and further to the communication control state.

Therefore, while Kang is such that the master 30 transmits the polling data once to one slave in one cycle, the arrangement set forth in claims 11 and 12 is such that the master repeatedly transmits the start request signal to one slave in one polling period.

In this response claims 1, 13 and 15 have been amended. Support for these amendments is found at page 19, lines 10-13 of the originally filed specification. It is submitted that the slave (according to the claimed invention) in the standby state is switched to the communication control state also when the sensor I/F 37 issues a communication start request, and that this is neither disclosed nor suggested in Kang.

Favorable reconsideration in light of the preceding amendments and comments is courteously solicited.

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